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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to provide data which described the current state of the art in the management of student teaching in agricultural education on a nationwide basis. Seventy-two teacher education institutions responded to a twelve-item instrument designed to determine how student teaching was managed. The results indicated a wide range of management procedures were used to prepare vocational agriculture teachers. The length of the student teaching period varied from 6 to 18 weeks. The number of hours the student was expected to spend teaching high school students varied from a low of 20 hours to a high of 360 hours. Concerning procedures and requirements in the management of student teaching, it was found that 53 percent of the institutions had less than or equal to two full-time teacher educators on staff. Seventy-eight percent of the institutions reported that the same number of staff members visited student teachers as there were total agricultural staff members at the institution. Almost 71 percent of the student teachers were visited a minimum of three times by staff during student teaching. Furthermore, 67 percent were visited by one staff member and 56 percent were visited for half a day or more per visit. (The survey instruments are appended.) (LRA)

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STUDENT TEACHING MANAGEMENT IN AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION: A NATIONAL STUDY

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STUDENT TEACHING MANAGEMENT IN AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION: A NATIONAL STUDY

Introduction

Providing meaningful student teaching experiences for individuals enrolled in agricultural education is a primary responsibility of teacher education institutions. Teacher educators in agricultural education who have received graduate and/or undergraduate degrees in more than one location or who have changed jobs and subsequently relocated to various colleges and universities have undoubtedly observed variability in the requirements and procedures applied in managing student teaching. This variability is realistic considering there are over 80 agricultural education teacher education institutions in the United States. Consequently, there could conceivably be over 80 different ways of structuring and managing student teaching. Is this the case? A review of literature has failed to reveal specific descriptions of management procedures and requirements.

The dawn of a new decade has initiated extensive reviews of the past and predictions for the future in agricultural education programming. Effective communication among professionals is one of the reasons agricultural education has remained a leader in vocational education, particularly in terms of providing superior and practical experiences for students. Although emphasis appears to be on experimental research, the effective collection and summation of descriptive data form a basis upon which the

experimental studies are conducted and upon which important comparisons are made. The availability of current status data with respect to agricultural education teacher education programs must predispose any attempt to predict and define the future trends and need in agricultural education as is being done at the present time.

Several studies verify that differences existed among institutions engaged in the preparation of vocational teachers for certification. A committee reporting to the American Vocational Assoication concluded that a wide range of divergence in certification requirements occurs throughout the vocational service areas and across states (Miller and Roehrich, 1977). Furthermore, Yoder and Bender (1976) mentioned the variety among states in certification standards in their study concerning internship programs.

In terms of specific references to student teaching management in agricultural education, two studies included data describing the length of student teaching. McCracken (1976) concluded that the student teaching period in the central region ranged from 6 to 16 weeks with a mean of 8 weeks. Benton (1973) concluded in a study that student teaching ranged from 6 to 18 weeks with a mean of 9.6.

In more precise terms, a description of the specific ways in which student teaching management is accomplished nationwide was needed to:

1. fill the void of such information in current literature,

2. provide a foundation of descriptive data upon which subsequent studies can be based,

3. increase the general awareness of the many alternatives which exist in student teaching management strategies, and

4. allow teacher educators to compare and self-evaluate his/her institution's methods with those of other institutions.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to provide data which described the current state of the art in the management of student teaching in agricultural education on a nationwide basis. The following more specific questions were studied:

1. In general terms, does the management of agricultural education student teaching vary among the teacher education institutions surveyed?

2. What procedures and requirements in the management of student teaching in agricultural education appear to be used by most institutions?

3. Which of the student teaching procedures and requirements affects the most student teachers?

Limitations

The following limitations apply to this study:

1. Several items on the Student Teaching Management Questionnaire required open-ended responses. Compilation and interpretation by the authors in an effort to condense and facilitate organized reporting, may have affected the original intent.

2. The survey instrument used had not been piloted beyond the authors' institution prior to use in this study.

Procedures

A descriptive study was conducted using survey methodology to determine how student teaching was managed. The Student Teaching Management Questionnaire, a self-designed instrument validated by panel review, was mailed to teacher education institutions within the 48 states listed in the Directory of Agricultural Teacher Educators (U.S.O.E., 1979). The teacher educators were asked to respond to the 12-item instrument and return it as soon as possible. After six weeks a followup phone call was made to those institutions yet to respond.

Of the 88 institutions contacted, 74 responded yielding an 84 percent return rate; however, because two institutions did not offer student teaching, only 72 questionnaires were used in tabulations. Thus, in determining the percentage of institutions responding per category, an N of 72 was used. The total number of students certified by the institutions responding was 1,365. Therefore, an N of 1,365 was used to calculate the percentage of students in this sample who were affected by the response in each category.

Results

The following tables are intended to provide a categorical summary of the various replies to items on the Student Teaching Management Questionnaire. Exceptions to the categories presented have been noted at the bottom of the appropriate tables. Each table includes the relative percentage of institutions responding per category and the relative percentage of the total number of

student teachers in the country (as summed from this study) affected by the occurrence of that particular response.

Table 1

Data Describing the Agricultural Education Staff

Response	Institutions Responding		Students Affected	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
Full-time teacher educators per institution[a]				
≤ 2	38	53.0	437	32.0
> 2 ≤ 5	27	37.0	682	50.0
> 5	7	10.0	246	18.0
Total	72	100.0	1365	100.0
Number of staff who made student teacher visits[b]				
Reported same number as number on staff	56	78.0	874	64.0
Reported fewer made visits than number on staff	9	12.0	300	22.0
Reported more made visits than number on staff	7	10.0	191	14.0
Total	72	100.0	1365	100.0

Table 1 (continued)

Response	Institutions Responding		Students Affected	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
Number of staff who teach courses for student teachers[c]				
Reported same number as number on staff	49	68.0	874	64.0
Reported fewer taught than number on staff . .	9	13.0	218	16.0
Reported more taught than number on staff	14	19.0	273	20.0
Total	72	100.0	1365	100.0

[a]Range: 1-12; Mean ($\bar{X}$) = 2.75

[b]Range: 1-8; Mean ($\bar{X}$) = 2.53

[c]Range: 1-8; Mean ($\bar{X}$) = 2.85

Table 2

The Student Teacher Population

Response	Institutions Responding		Students Affected	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
Average number of student teachers per term[a]				
≤ 8	28	39.0	246	18.0
> 8 ≤ 15	28	39.0	601	44.0
> 15	16	22.0	518	38.0
Total	72	100.0	1365	100.0
Average number of student teachers certified per year[b]				
≤ 10	20	28.0	136	10.0
> 10 ≤ 25	32	44.0	519	38.0
> 25	20	28.0	710	52.0
Total	72	100.0	1365	100.0

[a]Range: 1-27; Mean ($\bar{X}$) = 10.99

[b]Range: 1-55; Mean ($\bar{X}$) = 18.96

Table 3

Number of Weeks Spent Student Teaching[a]

Response	Institutions Responding		Students Affected	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
15-18	9	12.5	143	10.5
13-14	3	4.0	41	3.0
11-12	10	14.0	150	11.0
9-10	22	30.5	409	30.0
6-8	26	36.0	601	44.0
Total	70[b]	97.0	1344	98.5

[a]Mean ($\bar{X}$) = 10.24

[b]One institution reported 10.5, another reported 12-15.

Table 4

The Student Teaching Period

Response	Institutions Responding		Students Affected	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
Schedule of student teaching[a]				
One, full-time continuous period	66	92.0	1310	96.0
Two or more full-time periods	3	4.0	27	2.0
Half day student teaching, half day course work . .	2	3.0	27	2.0
Total	71	99.0	1364	100.0
Occurrence of student teaching during the term[b]				
Beginning	5	7.0	27	2.0
Mid-part	7	10.0	177	13.0
End	26	36.0	505	37.0
For the duration	25	35.0	478	35.0
Various combinations of the above four	8	11.0	150	11.0
Total	71	99.0	1337	98.0

[a]One institution reported half-time for 4 weeks on campus, full-time in schools for remainder of semester.

[b]One institution reported, "4 options (each 10 weeks) . . . September, November, January, and March."

Table 5

Hours Student Teachers Were Expected To Accumulate

Response	Institutions Responding		Students Affected	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
Teaching high school students[a]				
≤ 100	20	28.0	437	32.0
> 100 ≤ 200	25	35.0	464	34.0
> 200	9	12.0	109	8.0
No specific requirements	13	18.0	246	18.0
No response	5	7.0	109	8.0
Total	72	100.0	1365	100.0
Teaching adults/young farmers[b]				
0	11	15.5	205	15.0
> 0 ≤ 5	12	17.0	246	18.0
> 5 ≤ 10	8	11.0	164	12.0
> 10	6	8.0	150	11.0
No specific requirements	17	23.0	259	19.0
No response	14	20.0	300	22.0
Total	68	94.5	1324	97.0

Table 5 (continued)

Response	Institutions Responding		Students Affected	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
Observing other student teachers[c]				
0	16	22.0	341	25.0
> 0 ≤ 5	7	10.0	109	8.0
> 5 ≤ 20	9	12.0	177	13.0
> 20	7	10.0	164	12.0
No specific requirements	15	21.0	273	20.0
No response	17	24.0	273	20.0
Total	71[d]	99.0	1337	98.0
Observing supervising/cooperating teacher(s)[e]				
0	1	1.0	41	3.0
> 0 ≤ 50	35	49.0	614	45.0
> 50 ≤ 100	7	10.0	191	14.0
> 100	6	8.0	82	6.0
No specific requirements	15	21.0	273	20.0
No response	6	8.0	82	6.0
Total	70[f]	97.0	1283	94.0

Table 5 (continued)

Response	Institutions Responding		Students Affected	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
Observing teachers other than those in vocational agriculture[g]				
0	12	17.0	355	26.0
> 0 ≤ 5	16	22.0	259	19.0
> 5 ≤ 10	10	14.0	191	14.0
> 10	6	8.0	96	7.0
No specific requirements	15	21.0	273	20.0
No response	13	18.0	191	14.0
Total	72	100.0	1365	100.0

[a]Mean ($\bar{X}$) not determined due to excessive reporting in broad ranges; i.e., 120-180; range--20-360.

[b]Mean ($\bar{X}$) not determined due to excessive reporting in broad ranges; i.e., 40-60; range--0-(40-60); two institutions reported "optional," one reported "varies," and one reported "c.c."

[c]Range: 0-100

[d]One reported, "optional."

[e]Range: 0-300

[f]One reported, "40 minutes;" one reported, "varies."

[g]Range: 0-24

Table 6

Number of Student Teachers Placed Per Cooperating Center[a]

Response	Institutions Responding		Students Affected	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
1	48	66.0	792	58.0
1-2	10	14.0	231	17.0
2	13	18.0	328	24.0
Other	1	2.0	14	1.0
Total	72	100.0	1365	100.0

[a]Range: 1-3.

Table 7

Visitations During Student Teaching

Response	Institutions Responding		Students Affected	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
Number of times the student teacher is visited[a]				
< 3	18	25.0	396	29.0
≥ 3	54	75.0	969	71.0
Total	72	100.0	1365	100.0

Table 7 (continued)

Response	Institutions Responding		Students Affected	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
Number of staff that typically visit during a student teaching period[b]				
One staff member made all visits	48	67.0	915	67.0
More than one staff member made visits . . .	24	33.0	450	33.0
Total	72	100.0	1365	100.0
Institutions having only one staff member (from item #1a) that responded "No" to item #8b	15	21.0	164	12.0
Percentage of the school day spent per visit to a student teaching center				
$\leq$ 50%	13	18.0	601	44.0
> 50% $\leq$ 100%	59	82.0	764	56.0
Total	72	100.0	1365	100.0

[a]Range: 1-10.

[b]Range: 1-3.

Table 8

Influence of Supervising/Cooperating Teacher and University Staff on Student Teacher's Final Grade

Response	Institutions Responding		Students Affected	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
Equal influence	34	48.0	573	42.0
University staff has more influence	8	11.0[a]	219	16.0
Supervising/cooperating teacher has more influence	26	36.0[b]	464	34.0
No response	4	5.0	109	8.0
Total	72	100.0	1365	100.0

[a]Two responded 100%.

[b]One responded 100%.

Table 9

Student Teaching Requirements for Temporary or Emergency Certified Teachers

Response	Institutions Responding		Students Affected	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
Same requirements as for student teachers	32	44.0	560	41.0
Different requirements . .	31	43.0	655	48.0
Not applicable	9	13.0	150	11.0
Total	72	100.0	1365	100.0

The tables shown previously provide results of items from the Student Teaching Management Questionnaire which required a specific response. However, several items in the instrument (6-b, 7, 9, 10, and 12) were open-ended. The following lists serve as a synopsis of the various responses to these questions. Responses, whether complete sentences or phrases, have been recorded as originally written; however, when intent of responses appeared to coincide with a response which had been recorded previously, the response was not duplicated.

Responses to Item #6-b

If two or more student teachers are placed together, what criteria are used to match them?

1. The students must be majoring in different speciality areas; i.e., must have different cooperating teachers.

2. Compatible strengths and weaknesses relative to individual competencies.
3. Be able to get along; compatibility. (frequent response)
4. Close in teaching ability.
5. Personality.
6. Match with cooperating instructor.
7. Match strengths/weaknesses of center with strengths/ weaknesses of student.
8. No criteria, students select own center.
9. Not allowed by university.
10. Familiarity with geographic area.
11. Transportation.
12. Match backgrounds of the students.
13. GPA.
14. Age.
15. Sex.
16. Marital status should be the same.
17. Opposite strengths and weaknesses of student teachers.
18. Same sex.
19. Experience.
20. No specific criteria.

Responses to Item #7

What special considerations, if any, are made when assigning an individual student teacher to a center?

1. Married students and/or students with families are given preference. (frequent response)
2. No student serves in his/her home school or under a former vocational agriculture instructor. (frequent response)

3. Quality of center's program and teachers.
4. Distance from campus or student's home.
5. Previous vocational agriculture experience.
6. Spread student teachers around the state.
7. Economic factors.
8. Assigned near the campus or within the university's range.
9. Match school's and student's needs. (frequent response)
10. Availability of housing.
11. Avoid partiality.
12. Each is decided on an individual basis.
13. Not placed under a former vocational agriculture teacher; individual counseling.
14. Type of curriculum of center and student.
15. Compatibility with supervising/cooperating teacher.
16. Strength/weakness in FFA.
17. Familiarity with agriculture of the community.
18. Student's preference is considered.
19. Future employment goals.
20. Quality of prospective student teaching experience takes precedence over other considerations.
21. Not within 30 miles of home school.
22. Student must be able to reside in the community in which teaching.
23. Objectives of the student.
24. No special considerations.

Responses to Item #9

What criteria are used to select student teaching centers?

1. Match student's specialty area and school's program areas.
2. Teacher evaluation.
3. Quality of instructional facilities (classrooms/shop).
4. Distance from campus.
5. Cooperativeness of the instructional staff.
6. Experience of the teacher.
7. Teacher's attitude.
8. Recommendation from a state agricultural education consultant.
9. Teacher has master's degree.
10. Center maintains a complete program.
11. Length of tenure of instructor.
12. Have a student teaching center application.
13. University and state staff annually conduct a joint review.
14. Strong FFA program.
15. Evidence of continued professional growth.
16. More than three years teaching experience.
17. Effectiveness of local program.
18. Willingness of the administration to cooperate.
19. Minimum five years teaching experience in vocational agriculture; minimum of two years in present school.
20. Adult program.
21. School's philosophy.
22. Professional minded teacher.
23. Enrollment.

24. Advisory committee.
25. School must rank in top 25 schools.
26. Availability of instructional materials and teacher resources.
27. School meets state "Standards of Quality."
28. Supervising farming program.
29. Present program has been in operation at least five years.
30. Membership of teacher in professional organizations.
31. No specific requirements.

Responses to Item #10

What procedure is used to prepare local supervising/ cooperating teachers?

1. Summer workshop (1-3 days; 1 day; 2 days; 4-8 hours).
2. One hour review of procedures.
3. Individual visitation and instruction.
4. Inservice course.
5. Workshop during state conference.
6. One day workshop each semester.
7. Require three-hour graduate course, "Supervision of Student Teaching."
8. Manuals.
9. Correspondence.
10. This is handled by the Education Department.
11. Included in master's degree work.
12. Very little.
13. Currently, none.

Responses to Item #12

If temporary or emergency certified teachers are not required to fulfill the same student teaching requirements to become certified, what differences are allowed?

1. Complete an Individual Staff Development Plan which then becomes that individual's plan for certification when approved by the state.
2. One year "successful" teaching substitutes for student teaching.
3. Two years of teaching experience substitutes for student teaching.
4. Three years of teaching experience substitutes for student teaching.
5. If the individual has a teaching certificate in another field, a three-hour practicum is used in lieu of student teaching.
6. If the individual has a degree in agriculture and completes all education courses, he/she may take the National Teachers Examination (NTE). A passing score allows the student to skip student teaching.
7. Emergency credentials are not given by the state. Local school districts issue credentials which have specific qualifications.
8. If the teacher teaches three years and earns eight credit hours, student teaching is circumvented.
9. More supervision by staff during first year of teaching.
10. Must have a B.S. degree in a technical area of agriculture.
11. Emergency certified teachers are required to complete a 15-credit hour intern program while on the job.
12. If the individual is successful as a teacher and the school administration is pleased, a certificate is issued.
13. All emergency certified individuals are registered as interns with the university.
14. One full quarter of education courses before employment.

The following sections provide a presentation of results per research question.

Research Question Number 1

In general terms, does the management of student teaching vary among the teacher education institutions surveyed?

The results indicated a wide range of management procedures were used to prepare vocational agriculture teachers. This lack of consistency is apparent as one reviews the tables and summaries presented previously. For example, the length of the student teaching period varied from 6 weeks to 18 weeks. The number of hours the student was expected to spend (not necessarily required) teaching high school students varied from a low of 20 hours to a high of 360 hours. Likewise, a wide range occurred with respect to the number of times the student teacher is visited during the student teaching period, 1 to 10. Other examples are evident from the data presented.

Diversity is also evidenced by the scope of the summaries presented for the open-ended items on the questionnaire. For example, criteria for matching student teachers before assignment to a cooperating center included responses such as "we have no specific criteria," "students select their own 'partner' and center," "subjective matching is not allowed by the university," and "marital status should be the same." Furthermore, in response to the same question, two opposing views were noticed; student teachers should have compatible strengths/weaknesses, and student teachers should have opposite strengths/weaknesses. This is

possibly the result of two different philosophies with respect to the effects each student teacher has on the other.

As another example, in response to the certification of temporary or emergency teachers, the various possible requirements which could be substituted for student teaching included one year "successful" teaching, two years of teaching experience, three years of teaching experience, three years of teaching experience plus 8 credit hours, and requirements depend on the local school district.

Various key points showing the lack of consistency in the management of student teaching have been discussed. The discussion by no means mentions all variations in the procedures. Instead, selected indicators of this trend have been presented. Additional examples of diversity will be discussed in more detail under the other two research questions.

Research Question Number 2

What procedures and requirements in the management of student teaching in agricultural education appear to be used by most institutions?

The following statements are indicative of procedures and requirements that are most widely used in the management of student teaching as reported in this study:

1. Fifty-three percent of the institutions (Table 1) had less than or equal to two full-time teacher educators on staff.

2. Seventy-eight percent of the institutions (Table 1) reported the same number of staff members visited student teachers as there were total agricultural education staff members at the institution. (This

could indicate that all agricultural education staff members at a given institution are responsible for visiting student teachers. However, it could also indicate that individuals outside of agricultural education, such as agricultural engineering or curriculum/instruction, make visits to vocational agriculture student teachers, thus making the figure incorrectly appear to indicate a 100 percent participation of the agricultural education staff.)

3. Sixty-eight percent of the institutions (Table 1) reported the same number of staff members taught courses for student teachers as there were total agricultural education staff members at the institution. (As with statement number 2 above, this could indicate that 100 percent of the agricultural education staff taught courses for student teachers, but it could also indicate that staff outside of agricultural education also taught courses. The question specifically asked for the number of agricultural education staff; however, responses having the same number teaching as total staff members are questionable since 19 percent of the institutions reported that more agricultural education staff taught courses than there were total agricultural education staff members.)

4. Seventy-eight percent of the institutions (Table 2) prepared 15 or less student teachers per term (quarter or semester) with 44 percent averaging more than 10 but less than or equal to 25 per year.

5. Sixty-one percent of the institutions (Table 3) sent student teachers out for at least 9 weeks.

6. Ninety-two percent of the institutions (Table 4) conducted student teaching as one, full-time continuous period. Furthermore, 71 percent of the institutions (Table 4) arranged the student teaching period either for the duration of the term or toward the end of the term.

7. Sixty-three percent of the institutions (Table 5) expected the student teacher to acquire 200 or less hours of teaching high school students. Slightly more than half (51.5 percent) of the institutions (Table 5) expected a specified number of hours to be accumulated teaching adults/young farmers. Likewise, 54 percent expected student teachers to accumulate hours observing other student teachers; 58 percent observing the supervising/cooperating teacher; and 55 percent expected

student teachers to accumulate 10 or less hours observing teachers other than vocational agriculture teachers (Table 5).

8. Sixty-six percent of the institutions (Table 6) placed one student teacher per cooperating center.

9. Seventy-five percent of the institutions (Table 7) made at least three visits to the student teacher.

10. Sixty-seven percent of the institutions (Table 7) had one staff member that made all of the visits. (However, 15 of the 48 institutions responding only had one staff member.)

11. Eighty-two percent of the institutions (Table 7) spent at least half of a school day during a typical supervising visit.

12. Eighty-four percent of the institutions (Table 8) allowed the supervising/cooperating teacher as much or more influence as agricultural education staff members on the student's final grade for student teaching. (Only 11 percent reported that the agricultural education staff had more influence on the grade.)

13. Forty-four percent of the institutions (Table 9) reported that the same requirements apply to temporary or emergency certifying teachers as to student teachers. (Different requirements were reported from 43 percent.)

Research Question Number 3

Which of the student teaching procedures and requirements affects the most student teachers?

The following statements are descriptive of the student teaching experience to which student teachers in agricultural education are exposed:

1. Fifty percent of the student teachers (Table 1) were educated at institutions with more than 2 and less than or equal to 5 staff members. Thirty-two percent attended where there are 2 or less.

2. Fifty-two percent of the student teachers (Table 2) attended an institution which certified more than 25 vocational agriculture teachers per year.

3. Almost 36 percent (35.7 percent) of the student teachers (Table 3) were at the cooperating center for eight weeks. Others, 15 percent and 14 percent, stayed nine weeks and ten weeks, respectively.

4. Ninety-six percent of the student teachers (Table 4) engaged in student teaching during one, full-time continuous period.

5. Thirty-seven percent of the student teachers (Table 4) student taught at the end of the term; thirty-five percent student taught for the duration of the term.

6. Thirty-four percent of the student teachers (Table 5) were expected to accumulate between 101 and 200 hours teaching high school students. Thirty-two percent were expected to have 100 or less hours.

7. Nineteen percent of the student teachers (Table 5) attended institutions which reported "no specific requirement" for teaching adults and young farmers. Thirty-three percent were expected to have at least five hours.

8. Zero hours for observing other student teachers (Table 5) were reported by institutions containing 25 percent of the total number of student teachers. (These could be other vocational agriculture student teachers or student teachers outside of vocational agriculture.)

9. Forty-five percent of the student teachers (Table 5) were expected to accumulate from 1 to 50 hours observing the supervising/cooperating teacher. Only 6 percent were expected to have more than 100 hours.

10. Seven percent of the student teachers (Table 5) were expected to spend more than 10 hours observing teachers other than those in vocational agriculture. Sixty percent attended institutions that reported either "0," "no specific requirement," or "no response" on this item.

11. Fifty-eight percent of the student teachers (Table 6) were placed by themselves in cooperative centers during student teaching.

12. Almost 71 percent of the student teachers (Table 7) were visited a minimum of three times by staff during student teaching. Furthermore, 67 percent were visited by one staff member and 56 percent were visited for half a day or more per visit.

13. Forty-two percent of the student teachers (Table 8) had their final student teaching grade equally influenced by staff and the cooperating/supervising teacher. Thirty-four percent had their grade determined by the cooperating/supervising teacher's decision.

Conclusions and Recommendations

According to the data reported in this study, several conclusions can be identified:

1. Overall, agricultural teacher education programs are meeting or exceeding the ten week length of student teaching recommended in the Standards for Quality Vocational Programs in Agricultural/Agribusiness Education (1977). The mean has increased since 1973 from 9.6 to 10.24 weeks.

2. Staff visits during student teaching appear to be a priority in many institutions. Even though the length of student teaching ranged from 6 to 18 weeks, three-fourths of the institutions visit at least three times. The range for visits, 1-10, generally seems to relate to the length of the student teaching period. Furthermore, three visits are designated as desirable in the Standards for Quality Vocational Programs in Agricultural/Agribusiness Education (1977).

3. A number of institutions responding apparently believe that the supervising/cooperating teacher should have a direct influence on the student teaching final grade. This could often be justified since the supervising/cooperating teacher observes the student teacher's progress on a daily basis, not just during several periodic visits.

4. Sixty-six percent of the institutions place one student teacher per cooperating center. Many respondents also indicated that a 1 to 1 ratio of student teacher to supervising/cooperating teacher is maintained. The use of single teacher vocational agriculture departments as cooperating centers may partially account for the 66 percent figure.

5. One-fourth of the responding institutions either had "no specific requirements" or "no response" when asked to identify the number of hours the student teacher is expected (not necessarily required) to accumulate teaching high school students. Therefore, it can be concluded that over one-fourth of the student teachers are not expected to attain a specified number of hours doing what he/she will be primarily responsible for when on the job as a vocational agriculture teacher.

6. Over half of the institutions responding lack a specified figure for the number of hours the student teacher should spend teaching adults/young farmers. Furthermore, over half of the student teachers are affected. Apparently many student teachers are not gaining practical experience in teaching adults/young farmers even though they may be faced with that responsibility very early in their career. This is particularly important in light of the fact that adult education was identified as a "Challenge for the Future in Agricultural Education" at the 1980 National Agricultural Education Seminar in Kansas City (1980).

The data presented in this study would indicate that the management of student teaching varies widely among the teacher training institutions responding. The study indicates a broad range of procedures and requirements are utilized in managing student teachers. This study does not indicate which procedures are best; however, a data base is provided upon which subsequent studies can build. It is recommended that the following research questions be considered:

1. How does satisfaction during the first year of teaching relate to variables such as length of the student teaching period, number of visits by staff during student teaching, number of hours of classroom experience gained, etc.?

2. Do placement percentages relate to how student teaching is managed among different institutions which train vocational agriculture teachers?

3. What are the philosophical foundations underlying the current requirements and procedures being used to manage student teaching?

4. What priorities should be established for those experiences in which student teachers should participate?

5. Should the national standards for providing student teaching be changed and if so, what should the new standards be?

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APPENDIX A

STUDENT TEACHING MANAGEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Please respond to the following questions as briefly and concisely as possible.

_____ Institution

_____ Respondent

1. Please respond to the following concerning your student teacher and staff populations:

   a. Number of full time teacher educators in ag ed. _____
   b. Number of staff members who make student teacher visits. _____
   c. Number of ag ed staff who teach courses for student teachers. _____
   d. Average number of student teachers per semester or quarter. _____
   e. Average number certified per year. _____

2. How long is the student teaching period? _____ weeks

3. Which of the following best describes the student teaching period?

   Each student is assigned for:

   a. a full time, continuous period.
   b. two or more full time periods (i.e., 4 weeks course work/ 4 weeks student teaching, 2 weeks course work/4 weeks student teaching).
   c. half day student teaching/half day course work.

4. During the semester or quarter, does student teaching occur the:

   a. beginning
   b. mid-part
   c. end
   d. or, for the duration.

5. How many hours are students expected to accumulate in:

   a. teaching high school students. _____ hours
   b. teaching adults/young farmers. _____ hours
   c. observing other student teacher(s). _____ hours
   d. observing supervising/cooperating teacher. _____ hours
   e. observing teachers other than vo ag. _____ hours

6. a. How many student teachers are usually placed in a cooperating center during each student teaching period?

_____

b. If two or more student teachers are placed together, what criteria are used to match them?

7. What special considerations, if any, are made when assigning an individual student teacher to a center? (i.e., marriage, area of state, high school attended, previous vocational agriculture experience.)

8. a. How many times is the student teacher visited by staff during the student teaching period? _____ visits

b. Does more than one staff member typically visit a center during any student teaching period? _____
If more than one, how many? _____

c. What percentage of a school day is usually spent by a staff member visiting the student teacher? _____ percent

9. What criteria are used in selecting student teaching centers?

10. What procedure is used to prepare local supervising/cooperating teachers?

11. Please identify, by percentage, the influence each of the following have on student teachers' final grades.

supervising/cooperating teacher _____%
university staff _____%
other: _____ _____%
(please specify)

12. Are temporary or emergency certified teachers required to fulfill the same student teaching requirements to become certified as other students? _____

If "no," what differences are allowed?

*Additional Comments:

Please send a copy of your 1) student training manual and 2) student teacher evaluation form.

Return form to: Carla A. Kirts, Graduate Assistant
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